

XXXV.—*Note on the Collared Petrel* (*Æstrelata torquata*)
recently reported to have been killed on the Welsh Coast. By
OSBERT SALVIN, M.A., F.R.S., &c.

(Plate IX.)

IN the 'Zoologist' for December last (1890, p. 454), Mr. Harting gave a short account of a Petrel a specimen of which had been submitted to him for identification by Mr. J. W. Willis Bund. The same specimen has since been sent to me by our Editor, with a request that I would write a few notes on it and on the species to which it belongs, to accompany the figure of it that it has been thought desirable to place before the readers of 'The Ibis.'

Regarding the capture of the specimen, Mr. Willis Bund sends the following account:—

"The Petrel was killed between Borth and Aberystwith either at the very end of November or the beginning of December 1889. It was first seen flying slowly, and when it sat on the water was fired at and missed; it did not fly far, and was shot at again and killed. It was first shown to the vicar of the parish of Llanfihangel Geneu-'r Glyn (the Rev. J. M. Griffiths), who advised the man who shot it to take it to the Aberystwith bird-stuffer Hutchins, as he did not know what it was. Hutchins bought it from the man, and showed it to me in, I think, February 1890, as a Sooty Shearwater. I said that it was not that bird, but that I could not say what it was. I did not buy it at the time, but at last, when at Aberystwith subsequently, I purchased it."

The bird in question belongs, no doubt, to the species described in 1860 as *Procellaria torquata* by John Macgillivray, the well-known traveller and collector in many of the islands of the South Pacific Ocean.

That an individual of this species should have strayed so far from its usual home is a remarkable circumstance, for hitherto the home of *Æstrelata torquata* has been supposed to be limited to a rather restricted area in the South Pacific Ocean, extending from the New Hebrides to the Fiji Islands.

But the range of many Petrels is hardly less surprising.

A congener of the present bird, *Æ. hæsitata*, has been killed on more than one occasion in Europe, its home being, if it still lives, the Windward Islands of the West Indies. *Bulweria columbina*, well known as an inhabitant of the seas of the Canary Islands and Madeira, has lately been traced to the Sandwich Islands, and *Puffinus griseus* has a nearly world-wide range. Other instances of equally extensive range in members of this family could easily be mentioned.

The history of *Æ. torquata* is not a long one, and the main facts concerning it have been already given by me in this Journal (Ibis, 1888, p. 359). It was first discovered by John Macgillivray on Aneiteum, one of the New Hebrides group of islands, and was described by him in the 'Zoologist' for 1860 (xviii. p. 7133). Macgillivray obtained several specimens, some of which passed into the British Museum, some into that of Leyden, and two were kindly ceded to me some years ago in exchange by the late John Henry Gurney. All of these appear to have had Macgillivray's labels attached to them. The British Museum specimens were included in Gray's 'Hand-list' (iii. p. 107) as *Procellaria aneiteumensis*. The Leyden birds were identified by Schlegel with Gmelin's *P. desolata* (Mus. Pays-Bas, *Procell.* p. 13), a name strictly applicable to a *Prion* found on the Island of Desolation, better known as Kerguelen's Land.

Macgillivray states that *Æ. torquata* is found on the islands of Tanna and Erromango, as well as on Aneiteum, and I have seen specimens from Fiji, obtained by Kleinschmit when collecting for the Godeffroy Museum in 1878.

Macgillivray says that on Aneiteum it breeds in burrows on the wooded mountain-tops in the interior of the island, the highest of which attains an elevation of 2700 feet. A young bird, not many days old, and covered with black down, was brought to him on the 14th February, but he did not obtain any eggs. The native name, he adds, is "Katébu."

Æ. torquata is a typical member of the genus *Æstrelata*, but belongs to the smaller, less robust section. It is, perhaps, most nearly allied to a species found further to the northward in the Pacific, which I described in 1888 as *Æ. hy-*

poleuca. It has, like that bird, the whole of the inner webs of the primaries black to the shafts, and thus resembles *Æ. mollis*, but it is a smaller bird than either of these, and, moreover, has a shorter tail.

Macgillivray, in his description, alludes to the variation found in the specimens procured by him, which he attributes to difference of age. This variation chiefly affects the colour of the plumage of the under surface of the body, some specimens being nearly white, with a broken collar of grey on the breast, and others being grey from the breast downwards, the throat alone being white. It is now pretty well established that this variation is strictly individual, and not due to age or sex. I know of several cases of young birds which still have a good deal of down on their first feathers, which are those of the so-called fully adult, and not of an intermediate dark grey or brown stage.

The Aberystwith bird, as the Plate shows, is a dark individual, with the whole under plumage grey, with the exception of the throat. The outer four primaries are old, somewhat worn feathers; the rest are new quills, so that the bird was moulting when shot. This fact adds to our surprise that it should have strayed so far from its native haunts.

Macgillivray's description is as follows:—

“Above light grey, especially on the back, shoulders, and upper tail-coverts; the feathers of the two first situations often margined with white. Crown, back of head and neck, and auriculars sooty brown, which colour behind gradually blends with the grey of the back, and in front extends across the breast from each side to form an indistinct band. Wings, projecting an inch beyond the tail, dark sooty brown; the secondaries tinged with grey. Tail very evenly graduated, of twelve feathers, greyish brown. Face, cheeks, chin, and throat white; on the sides and front of the head the white merely tips the feathers, the base and centre of each being dark, giving a speckled appearance to the rest of that region. Lower surface white, except the undefined pectoral band; and on the sides, flanks, and under tail-coverts the feathers are minutely speckled with grey, and sometimes also have a

dark central line. Under wing-coverts white, showing as a conspicuous mark when the bird is on the wing, as in *Procellaria cooki*, to which, and to *P. mollis*, it is closely allied. Bill black; tarsi fleshy black; toes and webs, except basal portion of the latter, which are flesh-coloured, black. Total length $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches*; extent of wings 28; wing $8\frac{1}{2}$; tail $4\frac{1}{4}$; bill from rictus $1\frac{3}{10}$, and from base 1; tarsus 1; middle toe and claw $1\frac{4}{10}$. There is no outward sexual distinction."

XXXVI.—*Remarks on Macgregor's Paradise-bird*, *Cnemophilus macgregori*. By P. L. SCLATER, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.S.

(Plate X.)

MR. C. W. DE VIS, of the Queensland Museum, Brisbane, has most kindly forwarded to me for examination the typical and unique example of the new Paradise-bird, *Cnemophilus macgregori*, discovered by Sir William Macgregor's expedition during the ascent of the Owen-Stanley Mountains, and described by Mr. De Vis in the report on Sir W. Macgregor's birds, which has been reprinted in the January number of this Journal (see above, p. 25). I have had the pleasure of showing this beautiful specimen to Count T. Salvadori, Dr. Bowdler Sharpe, and other experienced ornithologists, who all agree with Mr. De Vis that it is a new and very distinct form, and well worthy of generic separation from other known birds. I also exhibited the specimen at the Meeting of the Zoological Society on the 3rd of March last†, where it attracted general admiration.

I have now the pleasure of giving the first figure of this brilliant bird (Plate X.) and of offering a few remarks on its structure and affinities.

Mr. A. P. Goodwin, who first mentioned and shortly described the present species, called it a Paradise-bird, and

* Doubtless a misprint. The Welsh specimen, which is mounted, measures, roughly, from the tip of the bill to the tip of the tail 12 inches.

† See P. Z. S. 1891, p. 179.



—CESTRELA TORQUATA.

J. G. Keulemans del. et lith.

Mintern Bros. imp.